

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please replace FIGURE 1 with the enclosed replacement FIGURE 1 illustrating a fixed feature on an endoscope shaft, such as a break-out box 150.

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REMARKS

The present Amendment and Request for Reconsideration is filed in response to the Office Action mailed June 2, 2006. Claims 27-29 are pending in the application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings because the reference number 120 was used to designate both clamping mechanism and engaging mechanism. In response, applicants have amended the specification to use consistent terminology. It is therefore requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to the drawings.

In addition, the Examiner objected to Claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph because it was not clear what the fixed feature was on the shaft. Applicant has therefore enclosed a replacement FIGURE 1 showing a representative fixed feature on an endoscope shaft, such as a break-out box 150, shown in phantom. It is therefore requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to Claim 27 in light of the replacement FIGURE.

Claims 1, 3, 7, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0133077 to Edwardsen et al. Without agreeing or disagreeing with the rejection, the applicant has canceled the rejected claims, thereby rendering the rejection moot.

Claims 4 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0133077 to Edwardsen et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,830,545 to Bendall. Again without agreeing or disagreeing with the rejection, applicant has canceled the rejected claims, thereby rendering the rejection moot.

In the Office Action, Claim 27 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. It is believed that the replacement drawing addresses the Examiner's concerns. It is therefore believed that Claim 27 and new dependent Claims 28-29 are therefore allowable.

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In light of the above, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw any remaining rejections and pass this case to issue at the earliest possible date.

If the Examiner has any additional questions regarding the application, he is invited to call applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope as first-class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the below date.

Date: August 31, 2006 Debra L. Whitney

RCT:mgp

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